

This guide is intended to be used alongside the ‘[So many books, how do I choose?](#)’ guide for children, to invite and encourage children to be more purposeful and confident when they choose books, which should increase the likelihood of children choosing books they enjoy.

Supporting children to make good reading choices is an essential step towards developing readers who enjoy reading, are engaged with what they read. Many children struggle to choose a book they will enjoy, and even experienced readers often settle upon familiar books rather than extending their reading experiences. Providing children with the time, skills and opportunities to choose books is essential. There are many factors to consider when supporting children’s reading choices:

1. Think and reflect:

Encourage children to reflect on what sort of book they are in the mood for. Do they want a book that will make them laugh, take them on an adventure, be exciting or help them learn something new? Encouraging reflection initially gets children to think about what sort of book they are in the mood for, and is an important step in the process of book selection.

2. Discuss strategies:

There are many different strategies available for children to select a book, however not all children have effective choosing strategies, especially less experienced readers. Strategies are provided in the resource for children and we’d encourage you to spend time explicitly discussing these and giving children the time to try these out in practice.

3. Peer to peer support:

Creating a school environment where children support each other’s reading choices is key to creating communities of readers. Providing time and supporting the skills for children to share and discuss their thoughts about books with each other is important – this may be through book-talk or writing reviews/recommendations for display. This peer to peer support is important in supporting each other’s reading choices.

4. Swap:

Ensure children know they have permission to swap a book if they are not enjoying it. Becoming an independent and confident reader is also about knowing when a book is not right, and this can happen even when a child has used good choosing strategies. If children feel they have to persevere with a book they are not enjoying, this will

5. Support and scaffold:

For many readers, but particularly less experienced ones, the process of selecting a book can be daunting as there is too much choice. A good way to support skills and confidence is to scaffold children’s reading choices, encouraging children to select from several books you have chosen for them, and talking them through the process of choosing a book. You may wish to share the strategies you use to choose books too.

6. Display:

Think carefully about how books are displayed in classrooms, reading spaces and school libraries as good displays can facilitate children’s strategies to choose books. Have books organised by genre, some books forward facing, visible book recommendations and carry out regular reviews of book quality and provision (ideally with input from children) to make decisions on which books to remove, and which books to add.

7. Provision:

It is much easier for children to find books they will enjoy when the books available align with children’s reading interests, preferences, lives, experiences and abilities. As much as possible, invite children to have input into new book purchases and continue to audit and refresh what you have – this may mean removing books that children never read. Remember sometimes less is more, but ensure you ask children’s advice when removing books – sometimes well-used books are favourite reads!